

Japan Imperial Institution: Discourse and Reality of Political and Social Ideology

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Abstract:- This study discussed the position and role of the Emperor based on two Constitutions that have been and are in force in Japan, namely the Meiji Constitution and the 1947 Constitution. The focus of this study was to describe Articles governing the position and role of the Emperor in Japanese government are implemented. The study found that articles governing the position of Emperor in the Meiji Constitution were not properly implemented due to military domination in the government. Emperor Hirohito in reality did not have full power in carrying out his functions according to the institution. Articles governing the position and function of the Emperor in the 1947 Constitution are proper. Emperor Hirohito, who was later replaced by Prince Akihito, carried out his position as a symbol of state unity by carrying out his ceremonial duties. Political ideology was very strong in the Meiji Constitution, while social ideology flows under the 1947 constitution. Emperor Akihito's throne, which will be replaced by Crown Prince Naruhito in April 2019, does not seem to have an effect on the implementation of the 1947 Constitution based on social ideology.

Keywords:- Emperor; position and role; meiji constitution; hirohito; akihito; kokutai.

I. INTRODUCTION

Japan, in 1890, had a modern Constitution under an absolute monarchy known as the Meiji Constitution. This constitution took effect during the Meiji reign, between 1889 and 1946, before the new Constitution was applied until now. The Meiji Constitution was designed based on the research conducted by Itō Hirobumi who was appointed to examine formula of European constitution which at that time were considered modern. Itō Hirobumi, in Europe, studied the Constitutional theories of Rudolf von Gneist (Germany 1816-1895), Lorenz von Stein (Austria, 1815-1890) and Karl Friedrik Herman Roesler (Germany, 1834-1894). Based on the results of Itō Hirobumi's research, it was decided that the Japan's Constitution should use Prussian constitution model. The Meiji Constitution was drafted by a Constitutional Formation Committee consisted of Inoue Kowashi, Kaneko Kentarō, Itō Myōji, Iwakura Tomomi and Carl Friedrich Herman Roesler, an adviser from German who was specifically invited to Japan¹. The Meiji Constitution was the basis for the implementation of the

state slogan *Fukoku Kyouhei* (Strong Military Rich State) proclaimed by Meiji government.

The Japan State Constitution, passed in 1946 and implemented in 1947, was compiled during the American Occupation under General Douglas MacArthur. Democracy and peace were the ideological foundation of the 1947 Constitution. The Imperial Institution was separated from the State institutions that run the Government. The position of the Emperor as symbol of State union shall not interfere in administration affairs of the Government.

In the Meiji Constitution, the Emperor was a Head of State who had wide prerogative rights. The system of government was based on the *kokutai* ideology (literally meaning: national structure or national polity), where Imperial Institution was the embodiment of the state itself and its existence was considered sacred. In the validity period of the Meiji Constitution, the Emperor was the supreme ruler of the country, which was also the largest political force in the country. In other words, the basis of the Meiji constitution's ideology was the *kokutai* political ideology that was implemented by means of general public mobilization.

In the Showa era, five years after Emperor Hirohito ascended the throne, Japan was again involved in a great war. It was started in 1931 Manchurian Incident and led to the 1941 Pacific War where there was a 'deviation' of constitutional monarchy². This was marked by the birth of the National General Mobilization Act during the reign of Prime Minister Konoe Fumimaro. The purpose of this general mobilization was to raise large funds to finance the war. This law gave great power to the government to mobilize all state and nation forces in wartime or in an emergency without going through the approval of the Parliament or the Emperor. This certainly drew sharp criticism from civilian politicians, even though finally the Law was accepted because of pressure from military faction.

At that time, military had special privileges and approved by the Emperor. Military affairs were monopolized by military groups and could not be monitored by the cabinet due to the rights of *Iaku Jōsō* used by the military³. In addition, the military also intervened too much

²Ishii, Ryosuke, *Sejarah Institusi Politik Jepang*, Jakarta: PT. Gramedia, 1988, hal. 164

³I Ketut Surajaya, *Demokrat Yoshino Sakuzō Penentang gijih militerisme, anarxisme dan*

¹I Ketut Surajaya, *Pergerakan Demokrasi Jepang*, (Jakarta: PT Karya Unipress), 1984, pp. 137-138

in the field of Japanese foreign policy until Japan was involved in World War II. After the defeat of Japan in the Pacific War, a new constitution was adopted and entered into force in 1947 until now.

In the 1946 Constitution, all prerogatives held by the Emperor in the Meiji Constitution were abolished and the Emperor was declared a symbol of the state and united Japanese people. The Emperor was permitted to do certain things related to the protocol of 'state affairs', but not allowed to interfere in political and governmental affairs. In other words, the existence of the Emperor was shifted from the realm of political ideology to socio-cultural ideology in Japanese society⁴.

II. DEFINITION OF PROBLEM

The problems discussed in this study are: the position, role and integrity of Imperial institution based on political and social ideology according to the two Japanese constitutions, the Meiji Constitution and the 1946 Constitution, as well as various political and social dynamics in the implementation of the two constitutions.

III. CONCEPT AND METHOD

This study used qualitative methods that emphasized the depth of information. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) stated that, qualitative research was descriptive, data collected in form of words or narratives and pictures, analyzing data inductively, and 'meaning' was important in a qualitative approach. Data collection techniques used literature study. Data was taken from sources in form of books, journals, previous research reports and online media.

Historical approach with heuristic procedures was implemented in finding primary and secondary sources, as well as verification to examine whether the sources were valid or invalid. Interpretation of valid sources was done to determine the meaning and correlation of facts that have been verified. Furthermore, the results of synthesis writing were obtained in form of historical stories.

Conceptually, the country's political ideologies were ideas, thoughts, visions and spirit of the state that were mobilized to be implemented in the state and of the state which was used as a guideline for the people in the state. Whereas social ideology was the social spirit of society which was the current under the spirit of state political ideology that was based on individual rights based on traditional cultural values both on individuals, groups and even the national community. The Meiji Constitution (1889) emphasized absolute authoritarian state ideology and politics, while the 1947 Constitution emphasized state's ideology of democracy and peace. The meaning of social

militerisme Jepang In Taisho Era, IakuJōsō is the right to meet or report directly of Prime Minister, Ministers and Military Commanders to the Emperor

⁴I KetutSurajaya, Ibid, also, in Harootunian, Harry, Hirohito Reduxin Critical Asian Studies 33:4, 2000, page. 631

ideology in Meiji constitution and 1946 Constitution were very different even though it cannot be separated from the same traditional culture, but with a different political ideology.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

Herbert P. Bix in his book Hirohito and The Making of Modern Japan (2001) described Hirohito's life as a Japanese Emperor in a tumultuous era. Emperor Hirohito lived in two very different times, the war time and the peacetime. Hirohito made his grandfather, the Meiji Emperor a role model, a wise and gentle Emperor, but at the same time was a straightforward person in the field of military and diplomacy. Bix also explained that Japan's cabinet at that time was divided into two factions, the military and civilian factions. There was an imbalance in which the military had the right to intervene state politics and the Prime Minister can only control the military through the Emperor or Military Minister. The military was divided into two factions, Japanese people who became troops under direct command by the Emperor and the faction that held the principles of military as an independent organization that is not controlled by the government.

In December 1926, at the age of 25, Prince Hirohito was appointed as 124th Japan's Emperor. In carrying out his imperial duties, he was assisted by 'imperial group' which initially consisted of *Naidaijin*⁵ Makino, *Jijū*⁶ Chinda, Minister of Imperial Home Affairs, Ichiki, *Jijū-bukan*⁷ General Nara, and three main secretaries. As the inner circle of government close to the Emperor, the group gave influence and guided the Emperor in the government.

Bix described Hirohito as a less assertive leader, because despite knowing that there was a conflict between the Army and Navy, the Emperor ignored the problems within the two institutions. There was also discontent from the right wing, which argued that the imperial group was too meddling so that the Emperor's will seemed 'directed' by Makino, Saionji, and other court circles.

In 1931, the political conflict between the military and the government of *RikkenMinseitō* (Constitutional Democratic Party) led by WakatsukiReijirō began to be serious conflict. At the same time, disputes emerged in Manchuria resulted in the killing of a Captain from the Kwantung army, Nakamura Shintarō. Emperor decided to handle issue of discipline problem within the military by

⁵Naidaijin (Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal of Japan) is group of people responsible in guarding the Japan's National Imperial Seal used to formalize order from the Emperor and also Government. The position was then abolished after Japan's defeat in World War 2.

⁶Jijū (Grand Chamberlain) is a leader of Jijū-shoku (Board of Chamberlain) which functionally also Head of Imperial Court.

⁷Jijū-bukan (Chief Militer Aide-de-Camp) is specific military officer with duty to report directly on military affair to the Emperor.

summoning Navy Minister Abo Kiyokazu and Army Minister Minami Jirō.

Abo reported that there was no problem in the Navy but he did not report military activity in Manchuria. Minami reported criticism thrown by young officers and said that the Army 'could not allow that and would fully suppress it.' However, he kept military plan to control Manchuria. The court process only learned the incident that took place in September 1931 from newspaper a day after the incident. Manchuria incident have triggered domestic and international crisis. However, even though the Emperor finally learned about the incident, the Emperor seemed to disregard the incident and did not intend to punish the responsible person. The Emperor's silence seemed to support military behavior.

Furthermore Bix explained that the situation in the Government was compounded by the Sakurakai plan, an ultranationalist organization which was secretly led by Colonel Hashimoto, to overthrow the government. However, the weak Emperor's reaction made this event seem to be forgotten. On one hand, the incident referred as the October incident triggered a conflict between two military factions. Kōdouha led by Araki Sadao, Mazaki Jinzaburō, and Obata Toshishirō against Tōseiha led by Nagata Tetsuzan, Hayashi Senjuro and Tōjō Hideaki. Although both factions had similar goals for reform of the Japanese government, Kōdouha preferred open-ended methods like coup d'etat and intimidation, while Tōseiha tends to choose more subtle methods.

At the end of 1933, Bix described Japan's national condition as unstable with enthusiasm for war. Military came with propaganda materials, which one of them was in form of a film. Based on the Emperor's ideology, Japan was said to have a sacred mission given by gods to fight western power and maintain peace in Asia. The Army Minister was the narrator in the film and conveyed the message of Japanese people to return to the 'Imperial road.' The Emperor himself seemed to agree that victory could be ensured by a strong military compared to strong production. However, he did not hesitate to start a conflict with Britain and the United States and did not want to radically militarize the country, because it would endanger the Empire.

In 1935 there were debates among intellectuals and politicians, regarding the Emperor's Organ Theory (Tennō Kikan Setsu) which was coined by Professor Minobe Tatsukichi of the Tokyo Imperial University. The commotion between these government's bodies continued until there was a rebellion by young military officers and thousands of troops on February 26, 1936 (ninirokujiken) who took over Ministry of Army and Police Headquarters. They killed Naidaijin Saitou Makoto, Finance Minister Takahashi Korekiyo and Inspector General of Military Education General Watanabe Jōtarou, also injured Suzuki Kantarō who later became Prime Minister.

The rebels considered the Emperor was only a puppet of his advisers. The Emperor immediately ordered a

crackdown on the rebellion in the following morning and Hirohito immediately declared 'martial law' based on Article 8 of the Empire's Constitution which governed the Empire in an Emergency. The Empire Conference (gozenkaigi), as described in the Bix book, was a meeting held to discuss issues of national and international issues. This meeting was a place that legally established the Emperor's order to be 'state order.' Thus, the ideal situation resulting from the system should be the cooperation between the cabinet and the highest military command in approving a policy passed by the Emperor.

In an effort to strengthen the image of the holy Emperor and support 'mobilization' spirit of the Japanese people for a protracted war, the Ministry of Education in May 1937 published and distributed approximately three hundred thousand Kokutai no Hongi books to schools. Kokutai no Hongi was focused on worship, respect for ancestors and Emperor who was the living god of the highest military leader with his virtues. This situation was exploited by Tōjō, as told by Bix, that on February 23, 1944 Tōjō removed Sugiyama's position as Minister of War. Thus, Tōjō held three positions at once, namely the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Army, and the Minister of War. Although most of the Generals from both the Army and the Sea were opposed, Tōjō was protected and supported by the Emperor. Tōjō's efforts indirectly, according to Bix, were a way to unite government affairs under military rule.

In mid-1945, war in Europe was finally over and Japan stayed alone. In the condition of the Empire that began to falter, Hirohito began to think of a peaceful path. On June 22, 1945 Hirohito personally expressed his wish to the High Council of War Leaders to stop the war with diplomatic efforts. After a while, the Allied Forces sent a peaceful ultimatum through the post-declaration in Potsdam.

The Allies issued the Potsdam declaration on July 26, 1945 ordering Japan to surrender unconditionally. But Japan did not heed the declaration because of the surrender requirement, which confused the Japanese government. In the declaration, there was no explicit statement about the status of the Emperor whether to be guaranteed by the Allies. So two weeks later the United States dropped an atomic bomb on Hiroshima, killing about 140,000 residents of Hiroshima. On August 9, 1945, a bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Hirohito, explained by Bix, did not say and do anything about the Potsdam declaration. In the end, at the urging of various parties, Hirohito ordered Foreign Minister Tōjō to announce that Japan would accept the terms of the Allied Forces on condition that it would not disturb the Emperor as the highest leader.

Bix also stated activities of the Emperor after the war. Emperor Hirohito, starting from 1946 to 1951, held visits throughout the country. The trip was purposed for the Emperor to feel the atmosphere of the field and give appreciation to the people who are struggling to rise. On April 28, 1952, the San Francisco Agreement and the Japan-United States Security Agreement entered into force along with the end of the United States occupation. After the End

of the American Occupation, Japan also focused on carrying out democratization based on the 1946 Constitution on economic reconstruction and foreign trade and physical development for cities damaged by war.

Although Hirohito was told several times to show assertive attitudes towards the military faction, Bix analyzed that the Emperor Hirohito was actually not just a puppet driven by the military. In his book, Bix stated that in early days of Japan's involvement in World War II Hirohito was even actively involved in the preparation of strategies and expansion plans. Bix denied the notion that Emperor Hirohito was considered innocent and not sent to trial in the Tokyo Court; while I Ketut Surajaya argued that constitutionally (if the implementation of the constitution did not deviate from the substance) the Emperor could be involved in the Pacific War. However politically, the Emperor's involvement could not be proven because the 'brain' and designer of the Pacific War were young officers in the military, unnoticed by the Emperor.

I Ketut Surajaya (2018) in an article entitled 'Imperial Institution as Japan's Culture Iconic Identity' stated that imperial institutions today become a symbol that unites Japan; there was also a change in Japanese society about Emperor's image and the Imperial Institution. The image of Emperor *Showa* who was known earlier as a militaristic Emperor, become popular Emperor, down to earth and close to the people. The position of the Emperor finally changed from the supreme leader of the country to be only as a 'symbol' a sacred values contained in the imperial institution. This condition could even function as a social ideology when Japan faced difficult times such as the catastrophic natural disasters of the Fukushima earthquake and tsunami in 2011. The spiritual power of the Empire's institution supported the current secular parliamentary system.

V. DISCUSSION

A. Gradation of the Imperial Institution

In contrast to Emperor Hirohito who inherited the victory achieved by Meiji Emperor in his day, Emperor Akihito experienced a gradual empire from wartime, defeat and transformation transition apart from the shadow of feudal ancestors bound by tradition and the Constitution. Akihito was the first Emperor who received education outside the palace and married common people was a figure of a modern Emperor who was still wrapped in an imperial institution that was thick with tradition.⁸ His marriage to Shoda Michiko who was 'ordinary people' rose the term of 'popular Emperor', egalitarian and loved by his people. The Emperor's existence was not 'as safe' as imagined by the people, and essentially the Emperor was just an ordinary human being like other Japanese citizens, but the 'charismatic Emperor's' aura could not be separated from the person who inherited the throne of the Empire. The difference captured by the community in the context of history and tradition is that Emperor Akihito proceeded in

⁸Reingold, Edwin M, Op.cit., 1992, page. 263

tradition and gave rise to the image of a modern imperial institution but still preserve traditional cultural values as characteristic of Japan, although there is no denying that in contemporary Japanese society there are groups who consider imperial institution is not a system that must be maintained in Japan. Kato Shuichi, a professor of Japanese Culture and International Relations, considered that the Imperial Institution is a 'fantasy' that has passed its validity period.⁹

B. Transition Period (1945-1947)

There were three important events that affected the lives of Japanese people in the first year of the United States occupation.¹⁰ The first was the arrangement of the imperial institutions, the function and position of the Emperor in order to welcome a new and peaceful age. Second, to carry out punishments against figures designated as war criminals and third were to arrange a new constitution to fulfill the democratic rights of the people.

On August 28, 1945, American forces finally set foot in Japan. Two days later, General Mac Arthur, Supreme Commander for Allied Power, hereinafter abbreviated as SCAP, came with more troops. The Allied Forces stated that Japan was under the direct supervision of SCAP, which regulated all administrative, legislative and judicial powers.¹¹ On September 2, 1945, Foreign Minister Shigemitsu signed a surrender agreement on the USS Missouri warship, which docked in Tokyo Bay. SCAP then set up its headquarters in the Daiichi Life Insurance building located opposite the Imperial Palace.

Mac Arthur's first meeting with Emperor Hirohito on 27 September 1945 created a deep impression between the two. Hirohito who expected SCAP's help in defending the Japan Empire enthusiastically welcomed Mac Arthur. The SCAP itself need the Emperor to help implement the Allied agenda in Japan. MacArthur used the Emperor and imperial institutions to create a 'friendly' environment during the American occupation.¹² Mac Arthur himself was personally amazed by the Emperor Hirohito who came before him with 'surrender' to give up and then awaited the international justice process (known as Tokyo Tribunal).

MacArthur directed the Emperor to dismiss his 'evil military' advisors.¹³ One form of policy implemented by the SCAP was the removal of elements that prevented democracy. They abolished the Law of National Peace,

⁹ Ibid, page. 264

¹⁰Bix, Herbert P, The Showa Emperor's "Monologue" and the Problem of War Responsibility in The Journal of Japanese Studies 18:2, 1992, page 300

¹¹Kataoka, Tetsuya, The Price of a Constitution: The Origin of Japan's Postwar Politics, New York: Crane Russak, 1991, page. 19

¹²Reingold, Edwin M, Chrysanthemums and Thorns: The Untold Story of Modern Japan, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992, page. 25

¹³Bix, Herbert P, Op.cit., 2000, page. 547

Security and Defense¹⁴ and the Special Police (Tokkou) which at that time had a special task to investigate and control political groups or ideologies that threaten state security.¹⁵ In addition, SCAP also abolished some habits that were considered feudal. On October 11, the 'Five Great Reforms' ('godaikakumei') were announced, namely the emancipation of women, the right to strike and the union of workers, and democracy in the fields of education, law and economics.¹⁶

The new formulated constitution was officially announced on November 3, 1946 and took effect on May 3, 1947. Initially, Konoe proposed a proposal for amendment to the constitution. However, his opinion was rejected because SCAP later arrested Konoe as a war criminal. Then a committee was formed to investigate matters concerning the revision of the Japanese Constitution chaired by Matsumoto Jōji. However, this Matsumoto committee only used minimal approach to change the Meiji Constitution.¹⁷ SCAP also sent a revised draft of the Japanese constitution with considerable changes. The draft of the SCAP was then considered by the Supreme Advisory Council and officially accepted by the Emperor.

After the Emperor's statement (Ningen Sengen = Emperor is not a descendant of God but ordinary humans), which was declared on 1 January 1946, the status of the Emperor as a holy entity and descendant of the gods was changed. During the preparation of the new constitution, the debate about the status of the Emperor was widely debated by two parties, the conservatives who tried to maintain kokutai against groups who wanted a monarchical system that was ceremonial and populist based. Joseph Grew as the US Ambassador in Japan from 1932 to 1941 argued that imperial institutions were a mechanism that maintained the stability of Japanese society and the American-style democracy that SCAP wanted to grow would not be that easy to be immediately embedded in society.¹⁸ However, in the end the Emperor accepted the British 'model' imperial system by considering the possibility of the system being completely abolished. So in accordance with article 1 of the 1946 Constitution, the supreme power that was originally in the imperial system moved to the people.¹⁹

¹⁴ Series of Law established in 1925 that will punish people who opposed kokutai. The law suppressed freedom of speech and at the time was used to oppress certain political group that against Emperor, especially socialist and communist

¹⁵Bix, Herbert P, Op.cit., 1992, page. 305

¹⁶Bix, Herbert P, Op.cit., 2000, page. 552

¹⁷ Large, Stephen S, Op.cit., 2003, page. 149

¹⁸ Nakamura, Masanori, The Japanese Monarchy 1931-1991: Ambassador Joseph Grew and the Making of the "Symbol Emperor System", New York: M. E. Sharpe, Inc, 1992, page. 156

¹⁹Okudaira, Yasuhiro, Forty Years of the Constitution and Its Various Influences: Japanese, American, and European dalam Japanese Constitutional Law, Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1993, page. 3

C. Emperor as a Symbol of Japanese Culture

There was a change in attitude towards the imperial institutions among the older generation who grew up before the war with generations who grew up after the war. According to them, Japan's imperial family is still needed to maintain ancestral traditions. The young generation did not feel the same affection and respect as their parents taught them before, but they saw the Emperor as an ordinary human being as equal as themselves. Japanese youth did not interpret the imperial system in hierarchical terms, so they felt that the imperial family should be closer to society.²⁰

The Emperor was no longer a god who was honored by the people, but as a person who was close to the people. Emperor Akihito's speech broadcasted on August 8, 2016 signaled the Emperor's desire to resign on the reason of health condition that made the Emperor unable to carry out constitutional obligations. Community reacted the statement in various responses. Those who supported the resignation of the Emperor Akihito argued that this was very human for the Emperor if he resigns due to health problems. Whereas the counter party argues that the resignation does not have a legal basis. The change of Emperor means the replacement of *Gengo* (the name of the era), which may affect many elements in Japanese life.

Therefore, the people who supported Emperor Akihito had two opinions. The first was the group that wanted a special regulation for Akihito to resign and the second opinion was a group that wanted a constitutional amendment to create a permanent system regarding the decline of the Emperor from the throne.²¹ Based on a poll conducted by Mainichi Shinbun in September 2016, 84% of respondents responded positively to Emperor Akihito's wishes and supported the revision of regulations so that future Emperor could resign for certain reasons.²² In addition, Yuka Takahashi, a 23-year-old student from Tsuchiuta, in an interview with IPF in 2016 expressed his opinion about Emperor Akihito's wish to resign." The Emperor is not just a 'symbol' but also an object that is worshiped with love. The Emperor really cared about his people and was very concerned about the country. So if the Emperor says that he should abdicate, then I believe that this is the best."²³

The death of Emperor Hirohito on January 7, 1989 had a major influence on people's lives. A 'silent period' appeared throughout Japan. Everyone did jishuku (restraint). All aspects of the activity seemed to be stopped to mourn and respect the Emperor Hirohito. Celebration activities were canceled. However, the behavior of this jishuku had

²⁰ Irokawa, Daikichi, The Age of Hirohito: in search of Modern Japan, New York: The Free Press, 1995, page. 124

²¹ <http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20161202/p2a/00m/0na/028000c>

²²

<http://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20160907/p2a/00m/0na/002000c>

²³ <http://the-ipf.com/2016/08/09/japan-emperor-akihito-youth/>

drawn criticism. In his book entitled *Emperor Hirohito and Showa Japan* (2001), Large told story of Meiji Gakuin's staff and students in November and December 1988 who organized a series of seminars on the Emperor's life journey. One of the discussions was the *jishuku* which they considered to be a subtle form of nationalism manipulation that could drag Japan towards militarism and war.²⁴

Although the Emperor was legally no longer considered a 'god' by Japan's constitution, but the culture of the Empire and the throne of the Emperor was still considered sacred in Japanese society.²⁵ The mystical rituals in the imperial family are still carried out until today. The ritual can be divided into three types, the rituals that are carried out periodically every year, the ritual performed at special times for the family of the empire and the country of Japan, and the *Shikinen Senguritual* which is conducted every twenty years.²⁶ Imperial rituals are usually carried out on *Isejingu*, *Kyūchū Sanden*, and the imperial palace.

One of the traditional ceremonies that were still preserved after World War II was the Emperor's funeral. Hirohito's funeral ceremony was done in two ways, namely first with the Shinto tradition. This ritual was performed in the Shinto style at the Imperial Palace and was only attended by the imperial family. After that it continued with a state ceremony and then a burial ceremony at the Imperial Cemetery in Musashi, Hachijōji, Tokyo. There were two hundred thousand people attending the funeral procession. Approximately 10,000 official invitations came from 5 heads of state, 14 members of the royal family, 11 prime ministers, 19 deputy heads of state and other officials. Matsuo Seto, a 72-year-old Ishikawa resident, made a 10-hour trip to attend the Emperor's funeral. He expressed his opinion, 'the Emperor was a symbol of our country, attending his funeral was like grieving for our own father. My heart was quite satisfied even though I could not see it with my own eyes.'²⁷

Ceremonies related to Shinto tradition, such as the explanation above are one of the duties of the Emperor listed in the 1947 Constitution article 7 point j. Then, the community was still carrying out the custom of having respect for the Emperor, such as visiting the Emperor's palace during the birthday or shouting 'banzai'. These habits are still being carried out because the Japanese people and government are trying to preserve cultural history as part of the national character that must be maintained.²⁸ The Emperor is a symbol that unites people in the context of social and cultural ideology.²⁹ So, the imperial institution is the driving force of Japanese nationalism.

²⁴ Large, Stephen S, Op.cit., page. 202

²⁵ Surajaya, I Ketut, Op.cit., 2018, page. 51

²⁶ <https://www.isejingu.or.jp/en/ritual/index.html>

²⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/1989/02/24/world/with-pomp-and-on-a-global-stage-japanese-bury-emperor-hirohito.html>

²⁸ Pangastoeti, Sri, Op.cit., 2004

²⁹ Surajaya, I Ketut, Op.cit., 2018

VI. CONCLUSION

The sacred Shinto teachings outlined that the Emperor was a direct descendant of Amaterasuōmikami. This logic validates the position of the Emperor in the Meiji Constitution as the highest sacral power in Japan. The doctrine was carried out in *kokutai no hongu* which is a compulsory subject in schools. The spirit of loyalty of the soldiers on the battlefield who are ready to sacrifice for the 'imperial road', is the application of *kokutai no hongu*. This Emperor's sacredness began to be denied after Japan lost the Pacific War. Under the occupation of the United States, a new democratic constitution is established and strengthens human rights factor. The 1947 constitution changed the Emperor's position which was sacred in the Meiji state's order, into a democratic state system.

The change in the constitution eventually leads to a change in the position and role of the Emperor in the state administration. The Emperor who was previously regarded as a god by the people turned out to be a symbol of unity of power that still exists today to maintain Japanese tradition and culture. At a time when many young Japanese did not care about the imperial system because they considered the imperial system to be an 'old-fashioned' inheritance that was less attractive than popular culture with an instant and creative nuance, they 'seemed apathetic' to issues related to the Empire's institutions. The existence of Emperors in Japanese contemporary society was not as significant as before the war. However, the existence of the imperial institution as an icon and preservation of Japanese culture was maintained because it was in accordance with the 1947 Constitution.

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